

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the subject application. Claims 1, 17, 20, 25, 27, 28, 29, and 30 are amended. Claims 10, 14-16, 19, 21-24, 26, and 31-56 are canceled without prejudice. Claims 1-9, 11-13, 17, 18, 20, 25, and 27-30 are pending in this application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 10 and 26-30 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim 10 depends from claim 1. As part of this Response, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the elements of claim 10. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Given that claims 2-9 and 11-13 depend from claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2-9 and 11-13 are likewise in condition for allowance at least because of their dependency on claim 1.

Claim 26 depends from claim 24, which depends from claim 19, which depends from claim 17. As part of this Response, claim 17 has been amended to incorporate the elements of claims 19, 24 and 26. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 17 is in condition for allowance. Given that claims 18, 20-25 and 27-39 depend from claim 17, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 18, 20-25 and 27-39 are likewise in condition for allowance at least because of their dependency on claim 17.

35 U.S.C. § 102 and 103

As part of this Response, the claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 and 35 U.S.C. §103 have either been canceled or amended (or had their parent independent claims amended) to include elements indicated to be allowable, as discussed above. These cancellations and amendments have been made in order to expedite issuance of the allowable claims. These cancellations and amendments have not been made to overcome, and should not be interpreted as having been made to overcome, the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §102 and 35 U.S.C. §103. Applicant reserves the right to pursue these claims in one or more continuation applications.


Applicant respectfully requests that the §102 and §103 rejections be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Claims 1-9, 11-13, 17, 18, 20, 25, and 27-30 are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and issuance of the subject application. Should any matter in this case remain unresolved, the undersigned attorney respectfully requests a telephone conference with the Examiner to resolve any such outstanding matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 9/21/04

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